

# Regional Council Activity Report

June 2, 2000



Briefing to Member Agencies from Executive Director James M. Bourey

## Executive Director's Report

Every year, the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) develops a Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget for the coming year. The purpose of this document is to provide grantors, MAG staff and the public with the Regional Council's policy direction and fiscal commitments in the agency's regional planning efforts. The total operating expenses contained in the FY 2001 budget — which begins July 1, 2000 — equal about \$5.2 million, while total expenses equal about \$11.6 million.

While the numbers are the illustration, it's important to remember that this document is really the story that tells of the many successful regional activities and programs conducted by MAG throughout the year. All of the air quality, transportation, regional development, human services and information services programs that we conduct throughout the fiscal year are outlined in the work program, based on goals identified by the MAG Regional Council.

It's a story with many chapters and many different story lines, but all with the same ending: a region that consistently benefits from the commitments made by our member agencies in areas which most significantly affect our quality of life. From the quality of the air we breathe, to how quickly we can get from home to work, to the open space we enjoy, the tedious-sounding "Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget" chronicles the programs that construct our regional home. It is a sequel: while our first story was one of making good on our promise to citizens to deliver a regional freeway system, in 2001 we will take a serious look at how mobility will best be achieved in the future. The goals set forth in this document will also help us accommodate the impacts of our new economy.

Among the projects contained in the work program:

- ◆ Developing a New Regional Transportation Plan that takes into account our changing work patterns and examines the effects of evolving demographics.
- ◆ Preparing a major revision to the MAG 208 Water Quality Management Plan.

- ◆ Developing domestic violence recommendations focused on faith-based communities and workplace policies.
- ◆ Establishing an automated unified building permit process.
- ◆ Creating a plan and recommendations on addressing homelessness through the use of federal Stewart B. McKinney funds.
- ◆ Examining how to facilitate a regional fiber optic network.
- ◆ Assisting member agencies with implementing the planning requirements for growing smarter and fostering an integrated approach at the regional level.
- ◆ Installing videoconferencing equipment at member agency sites and conducting regular videoconferencing or audio conferencing meetings.
- ◆ Implementing the five-year MAG Pedestrian Plan and creating the Regional Off-Street System Plan for bicycling and walking.

The Regional Council approval of the FY 2001 Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget sets the stage for a very productive year. It is our continued pleasure to serve our member agencies in the implementation of these policies and programs. We look forward to another great year of enabling our region to address its challenges and embrace its opportunities.



## **Regional Council Meeting Report for May 24, 2000**

### **Group Makes Recommendations on County Jail Issues**

A working group formed to examine municipal prisoner issues related to the building of new County jail facilities presented its interim report to the Regional Council. The MAG Incarceration of Municipal Prisoners Working Group examined issues ranging from per diem and booking rates to medical billings and operation coordination. Recommendations of the group included the following:

- ◆ Cities should support the Sheriff's Office in its control of operating costs.
- ◆ A reserve account should be established for fees collected for depreciation of jail facilities.
- ◆ Cities should explore the feasibility of the County establishing per diem rates that reflect the cost of lower security requirements.
- ◆ Cities should receive immediate notification when prisoners are admitted to a hospital.
- ◆ Software should be improved to enhance communication between criminal records and health facilities.

- ◆ Sheriff's Office should accept faxed release orders.
- ◆ Cities should explore a flat rate insurance program to eliminate tracking of prisoners for billing notification.

The group also suggested that it continue its efforts and report back to the Regional Council in one year. The Regional Council unanimously approved the interim report.

**For more information contact Dennis Smith, MAG Assistant Director, (602) 254-6300.**

### **Council Approves Closeout Projects and TIP Amendments**

Every year, MAG conducts a closeout process to ensure that all Federal Obligation Authority transportation funds allocated to the MAG region are used and not lost. This year, just under \$11 million was available for closeout projects. MAG received about \$18 million in project requests for the funds. The MAG Regional Council approved a list of recommended projects from the Transportation Review Committee to utilize the \$11 million in available funds. Among the funding and projects approved for the closeout were \$496,000 for establishment of a videoconferencing network; \$300,000 for a Regional Wide Area Network Study; \$300,000 in funding for a Summer Ozone Education Campaign; \$250,000 toward a major investment study of the Scottsdale Transit Corridor (with Scottsdale and Tempe picking up the remaining \$500,000 cost of the study); and \$750,000 for Freeway Service Patrols. (For more information on the Freeway Service Patrols, see information items below).

**For more information contact Paul Ward, MAG Transportation Programming Manager, (602) 254-6300.**



### **Upcoming Issues**

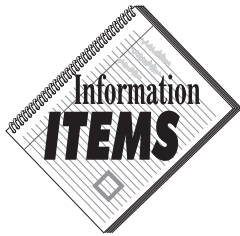
#### **Referendum to Eliminate Income Tax Likely to Make Ballot**

Proponents of an initiative currently circulating in Arizona to repeal the state income and corporate income tax are continuing their attempts to get enough signatures to put the issue on the November ballot. That comes despite opposition from the Arizona Tax Research Association (ATRA), Arizonans Against Unfair Tax Schemes and the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy (ITEP). These groups all vigorously oppose the plan — in fact, this is the first time ATRA has taken a position on an initiative prior to its

qualifying for the ballot. The fiscal impact of the initiative to state and local governments would be severe. The groups say elimination of income taxes would cut the State General Fund by 49 percent, from \$6.0 billion to \$2.9 billion. The groups estimate this would result in the elimination of state-shared revenues of about \$350 million.

Besides ending all Arizona state and local income taxes over a four-year phase-out period, the initiative requires that any new taxes be approved by a majority of voters. It also permits presidential and congressional candidates to sign a pledge to eliminate the federal income tax and the IRS in favor of a federal tax on economic consumption.

**For more information contact Carol Kratz, MAG Human Services Manager, (602) 254-6300.**



## **Information Items**

### **Freeway Service Patrols to Assist Motorists**

The MAG Regional Council voted unanimously to provide \$750,000 in funding necessary to help launch and operate the Freeway Service Patrol program. The Freeway Service Patrols will consist of roving road repair service vehicles which can provide on-the-spot assistance to stranded motorists. The service will be manned by Roadside Motorist Assistants, who will patrol the Valley freeway network looking for disabled vehicles. It is expected that the patrol vehicles will eventually have direct radio communication with regional traffic management centers in order to effectively share information about backups that occur when vehicles break down.

The funding for the patrols comes from MAG federal funds designated to improve air quality. The patrols were recommended by the MAG Intelligent Transportation Systems Committee as a way to increase traffic mobility and improve safety. The Arizona Department of Transportation has committed to an additional \$750,000 to continue the program beyond the first two years.

**For more information contact Sarath Joshua, MAG Intelligent Transportation Systems Program Manager, (602) 254-6300.**



## **Upcoming Events**

### **RSVPs Needed for Desert Peaks Awards**

The deadline for registration and payment to be received for the Third Annual Desert Peaks Awards ceremony is June 6, 2000. The Desert Peaks Awards will be held on Wednesday, June 21, 2000, immediately following the MAG Regional Council Annual Meeting at the Phoenix Airport Marriott Hotel, 1101 N. 44<sup>th</sup> Street, Phoenix. Reception with cash bar begins at 5:30 p.m., with dinner and awards from 6:30-8:30 p.m. The projects, partnerships and individuals named as finalists include:

#### **Public Partnership:**

- East Valley DUI Task Force
- Maricopa County Slumlord Task Force
- Mesa Gang Intervention Project

#### **Public-Private Partnership:**

- Governor's Ozone Alert Program
- LOCK 'EM OUT
- SAFE KIDS Coalition of Maricopa County

#### **Distinguished Service:**

- Tom Canasi, Social Services Manager, City of Tempe
- Mayor Neil G. Giuliano, Mayor, City of Tempe
- Norris Nordvold, Intergovernmental Affairs Director, City of Phoenix

#### **Regional Partnership:**

- Intergovernmental Agreement — Revenue Sharing
- Mesa's Center Against Family Violence
- START (Southwest Transit Assessment Review Team) Pilot Project

#### **Regional Excellence:**

- Michael S. Ellegood, Chief Engineer & General Manager, Flood Control District of Maricopa County
- Peggy Jones, Councilmember, City of Avondale
- Sandra J. Reagan, Executive Director, Southwest Community Network.

The Master of Ceremonies for the Awards evening will be morning television personality Tara Hitchcock of *Good Morning Arizona*, KTVK 3TV. The cost per person is \$40. To RSVP, please contact DeDe Gaisthea at (602) 254-6300.

**For more information about the awards program contact Kelly Taft, MAG Communications Program Manager, (602) 245-6300.**

**Next Regional Council Meeting**

The next Regional Council Meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 21, 2000 at 5:00 p.m. at the Phoenix Airport Marriott Hotel. This will be the MAG Regional Council Annual Meeting. Agenda items for the annual meeting are expected to include election of MAG officers; the Desert Spaces Implementation Task Force and Environmentally Sensitive Development Standards, which were carried forward from the May 24, 2000 Regional Council meeting; and consultant selection for the Grand Avenue Northwest Corridor Study. The Regional Council Annual Meeting will be immediately followed by the Desert Peaks Awards evening.

**For more information contact Dennis Smith, MAG Assistant Director, (602) 254-6300.**